

ISSN 2074-028X Vol 21 No 1 2025



DHAXALREEB

Somaliland Centre for African Studies

March 2025

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**An Academic Journal of Somaliland
Centre for African Studies (SCAS)**

Vol 21. No. 1
March 2025

Somaliland Centre for African Studies
Hargeysa Cultural Centre



Dhaxalreeb Academic Journal

*Soo saare / Publisher: Ponte Invisibile Edizioni on behalf of Somaliland
Centre for African Studies, REDSEA Culture Foundation | Hargeysa
Cultural Centre*

www.redsea-online.org | info@redsea-online.org

Tifatire guud / Editor in chief
Dr. Jama Musse Jama, jama@redsea-online.org

*Tifatire xigeen iyo tifatiraha cadadkan / Associate Editor and Guest
Editor of the issue*

Tirsit Yetbarek, tirsit.yetbarek@redsea-online.org

Wakiillada/Country representatives

Ka eeg <http://www.redsea-online.org/dhaxalreeb>

Qoraalka ku socda tifatiraha / Articles to the editor

Email: dhaxalreeb@redsea-online.org

Buugaagta / Books for review
Jama Musse Jama

Via Pietro Giordani 4, 56123 Pisa, Italy or Xarunta Dhaqanka ee
Hargeysa, Sha'ab area, Hargeysa, Somaliland.

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Internal and cover design HCC/Aragsan, Hargeysa, Somaliland.
Published and bound in Somaliland.

Gu' | Spring

Dhaxalreeb - ISSN 2074-028X Vol 21. No. 1, 2025

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List of contributors

ABDIAZIZ Mahdi Ahmed “Guudcadde” is a student of human psychology, translator and author based in Hargeisa, Somaliland. He studied psychology at Frantz Fanon University, in Hargeysa. He translated some critical literature into Somali, including but not limited to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Dr. Mohamed Aden's *Back to Mogadishu*, Dr. Abdourahman Barkat Good's *Portrait of the New Being*, and many more.

ABDULHAMID Abdulahi Ahmed is a resident scholar at the Hargeysa Cultural Centre and a doctoral candidate in Ethiopian Philology at Addis Ababa University. He is a prolific author and researcher who specializes on the history, language, culture, and heritage of the Harari people. Among his noteworthy achievements are his presentations at international conferences on the use of the Sabeian alphabet in the Harari language and his linguistic examination of old Harari. Along with local academics, he co-authored Harari dictionaries in both monolingual and multilingual (Harari/English/Amharic/Oromifa) languages. Abdulhamid gave a talk on Ethiopian Islamic manuscripts and visited different Qur'anic schools in Harar and Hargeysa for comparism studies. Mr. Abdulhamid Abdullahi trained at the Hargeysa Cultural Centre on "ajami manuscripts of the Horn," and he is the author of two books devoted to Harari heritage.

FATHI Jama: is a writer specializing in the political and cultural dynamics of the Horn of Africa. His work focuses on regional affairs, with particular attention to Somaliland and the broader geopolitical landscape of the Horn.

JAMA Musse Jama is an ethno-mathematician with a PhD in African Studies specialising in Computational Linguistics of African Languages. He is the Director of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre in Somaliland, and has a Researcher position at *Istituto Linguistica Computazionale* (ICL),

Centro Ricerca Nazionale (CNR), Pisa, Italy and University College London, UK. A fellow of RVI, Dr Jama Can be also reached @JamaMusse on social media.

MOUSTAFA Ahmad holds a Bachelor's degree in Global Studies and International Relations from New Generation University College, Hargeysa, Somaliland. His research interest are the politics, governance and cultural heritage of Somaliland.

Nasra Dahir Mohamed is a multidisciplinary professional with an MPhil in Public Policy from Riphah International University in Islamabad, Pakistan. She holds dual Bachelor's degrees in Political Science and International Relations from the Civil Service Institute in Somaliland, as well as a BSc in Medical Laboratory Science from Edna Adan University. She has extensive experience in research coordination, translation, and transcription, having worked with a range of international organizations, local institutions, government agencies, and Ph.D. researchers. She has a strong academic and personal interest in Somali culture and poetry, with a focus on its role in shaping identity, memory, and social transformation.

RICHARD Atimniraye Nyelade is a scholar and part-time lecturer at the University of Ottawa, contributing to sociological and anthropological studies. He holds a PhD in Sociology from Shanghai University and is pursuing a second PhD in Anthropology at the University of Ottawa, which he expects to complete by this year (2025). His current research centres on his dissertation titled "Navigating Sovereignty in a Hostile World: Stratagems and Representations by Diplomats in Taiwan and Somaliland.". Richard's academic and research endeavors are deeply rooted in decolonial theories, state and power coloniality, and African politics, with a particular emphasis on postcolonial theory.

ROOBLE Mohamed is a Communications Specialist and the Editor-in-Chief of Red Sea Maritime Journal with a background

in journalism, media, and public diplomacy. He has worked across government, academia, and international organizations in Somaliland. His interests include maritime security, foreign policy, and regional development in the Horn of Africa. He can be reached at rooble.mohamed@gmail.com

TIRSIT Yetbarek Seme is Head of the Somaliland Centre for African Studies at the Hargeysa Cultural Centre. She comes from a language, literature, journalism, peace and security, and sociolinguistics academic and research background. She is interested in the development and political dynamics of the Horn of Africa. She can be reached at tirsit.yetbarek@redsea-online.org

Editorial

Jama Musse Jama

New frontiers to explore

On 21 January 2025, Redsea Cultural Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Pluto Journals Ltd and African Books Collective. With this edition, in fact, *Dhaxalreeb Academic Journal* is officially co-published by the Redsea Cultural Foundation in Somaliland and Pluto Journals in the UK. Two years ago, the Somaliland Centre for African Studies adopted the journal, reforming its editorial policies to evolve it from a publication focused on arts and cultural news into an interdisciplinary academic journal. The editorial team and production leadership will remain based in Hargeysa, ensuring the journal continues to provide a vibrant publishing environment, especially for academics from the Global South. The collaboration with Pluto Journals is expected to give greater prominence to academic voices from the Global South, helping to widen the dissemination of content that has previously struggled to gain traction.

This partnership is part of the 'African Journals Initiative' (AJI)¹, a programme created by Pluto Journals² and the African Books Collective³. The initiative collaborates with an increasing number of *diamond open access* social science and humanities journals based in African universities, operating entirely without fees for authors or readers. The initiative receives support from ScienceOpen⁴ and JSTOR⁵.

¹ see <https://www.plutojournals.com/african-journals-initiative/>

² Pluto Journals is an independent publisher owned by the not-for-profit Pluto Educational Trust, and publishes twenty+ diamond OA journals.

³ African Book Collective has thirty-five years of experience helping African academic publishers to distribute books globally.

⁴ ScienceOpen is a web-based platform, that hosts open access journals and run by an organization based in Berlin: www.scienceopen.com.

⁵ JSTOR is a digital library that provides access to academic journals, books, and primary sources. <https://www.jstor.org>.

Dhaxalreeb is one of six journals chosen for the initiative's first cohort, alongside *Zamani: A Journal of African Historical Studies* (Tanzania), the *Journal of Humanities* (Malawi), the *Legon Journal of the Humanities* (Ghana), the *Ethiopian Journal of Education* (Ethiopia), and the *Ibadan Sociology Journal* (Nigeria). The aims of this three-year pilot programme are to improve the discoverability and visibility of African journals, increase their usage and submissions, and assist in securing funding from academic consortia and libraries. The programme is designed to offer participating journals a range of services, including enhanced visibility and discoverability, indexing, user-friendly submission systems, and comprehensive annual impact reports.



Under this initiative, SienceOpen will offer support to *Dhaxalreeb* and other participating journals regarding the proposal submission and overall peer-review processes. At the same time, JSTOR will amplify these voices by distributing the content on its established platform. *Dhaxalreeb*, a pan-African, peer-reviewed journal from the Somaliland Centre for African Studies, is rooted in indigenous knowledge production and research focused on the Horn of Africa. It plans to utilise the initiative for enhanced discoverability and indexing. According to JSTOR, the AJI project advances the shared mission of JSTOR, Pluto Journals, and the African Books Collective "to increase access to scholarly content and to support sustainable open access solutions, especially in regions with historically low content visibility."⁶ Through this partnership, the Dhaxalreeb editorial team hopes to improve discoverability and streamline access to the journal content⁷.

A new editorial board

The new development within our publishing line is not only that: we have new editorial board members who have recently joined. We welcome them and are grateful to have a robust team of various expertise that will enhance the quality of the production. Professor Giorgio Banti, Professor Emeritus at Oriental University of Naples, Italy; Professor Lee Cassenelli at the University of Pennsylvania, USA; Professor Michael Walls at University College London, UK; Dr Nasir M. Ali of Laas Geel Institute of International Relations, Somaliland; Dr Mohamud H. Hussein, Agribusiness Solutions, Somaliland; Clare Bath, University of Notre Dame, USA; Dr Kedir Jemal, University of Haramaya, Ethiopia and Dr. Idris Elmi, Deeqsan Publishers, Djibouti; are all joining the previous editorial board, Amina Mohamud, Redsea Cultural Foundation, Somaliland; Roble

⁶<https://about.jstor.org/blog/opening-access-amplifying-voices-six-african-journals-now-on-jstor>

⁷Dhaxalreeb contents are available at <https://www.jstor.org/journal/dhaxjacadsoma/>

Mohamed, Somaliland Centre for African Studies; Tirsit Yetbarek, Somaliland Centre for African Studies; and Dr Jama Musse Jama as Chief Editor of the editorial board.

The new team are eager to facilitate access to publishing platforms for scholars, especially those in the Global South, through a swift and high-quality review process. Their diverse academic backgrounds, combined with their scholarly work focused on the region, enhance the valuable role they play.

Collective action is the engine of change, and the progress made with this issue stands as a testament to our dedication. We therefore urge all scholars to join us in fostering an inclusive academic community and cultivating authentic knowledge that values depth and integrity over rapid output.

As usual, we welcome contributions from researchers at all career stages, from established academics to those just starting out, with a special focus on nurturing and uplifting emerging voices. We eagerly anticipate collaborating with our academic networks and connecting with Africanist scholars worldwide.

We recommend to explore the new submission tools. Details on the new submission process can be found on the journal's dedicated submission page at <https://www.plutojournals.com/dhaxalreeb>.